

SITCOMM Meeting Summary

August 23, 2004

IT Committee Summary

The new State IT Committee met as a group for the first time on 8/19/04. To start with, every representative gave a synopsis of what the IT world looked like in his/her respective agency/department.

We then discussed, in general terms, the large task ahead of us. We were able to put the essential, operating framework activities up on a white board to get a sense of scope and what the entire project plan would entail. In terms of goals, we briefly discussed what was already given to us by virtue of the July 6, 2004 from Secretary Smith to selected Agency/department heads.

We expected to get down to specific work at the next meeting, using the rough project plan as a guide.

August 30, 2004

IT Committee Summary

The State IT Committee, which is now calling itself SITCOMM, held its second meeting and reviewed a high-level project plan comprising committee operating procedures, major objectives, quick success project candidates, and preliminary activity schedules.

Statewide e-mail system consolidation and external website access monitoring or .surf control. as it is called, were two areas identified as probable short-term projects. Making the State.s website .portal. more e-government capable was discussed as one important longer-term objective.

Work on a mission statement was begun, which was to be incorporated as part of a chartering document for the committee to be drafted for review at the next meeting. The role the current Information Resource Management Advisory Council (IRMAC) was discussed, and this will be the main topic of the next meeting.

September 6, 2004

State IT Committee Summary

The State IT Committee reviewed and edited its charter of operations document, which included mission and vision statements. The charter will be posted on the CIO.s webpage shortly.

A discussion was initiated on the role that the Information Resources Management Advisory Committee (IRMAC) will play. It is envisioned that the IRMAC will be reconstituted as a number of technical action/advisory subcommittees, given specific tasks and timeframes by the SITCOMM.

One notion addressed was that all State IT employees be considered to be IRMAC members, thereby maximizing inclusion. The original structure was 15 representatives from the major agencies/departments. From this larger pool, and as needed, the various functionally-oriented subcommittees would be formed.

A draft of the revised Bulletin 1.5 which established the IRMAC will be reviewed at the next meeting.

September 13, 2004 State IT Committee Summary

Vision system-based spreadsheets were reviewed in the attempt to collect the statewide FY05 budget-based numbers of IT staff and the estimated expenditures on IT projects. IT staff totals included permanent, limited service, and temporary positions, and were complete - but not dollarized. Project expenditures had many gaps in the collection of data, the consensus being that additional, more detailed and standardized financial coding would be necessary to unify the expenditure data.

A draft of the revised Bulletin 1.5 which originally established the IRMAC was reviewed in this context. There was much discussion on whether the Bulletin should just be revised and reissued, or whether the restructure of the IRMAC should part of SITCOMM.s chartered responsibilities and the original bulletin withdrawn. The main point was that SITCOMM would establish the list of prioritized IT projects to be initiated, but that collaboration had to be an essential element of the relationship between SITCOMM and IRMAC. This concept will be further addressed at the next meeting.

September 20, 2004 State IT Committee Summary

The entire SITCOMM meeting on 9/16/2004 was devoted to a discussion with Microsoft Corp.s regional state government technical support representative about electronic messaging, which for SITCOMM primarily means e-mail and calendaring (the e-messaging area also includes instant messaging and video conferencing technologies). Basically, there are two ways that most enterprises deploy such systems . fully centralized and partially decentralized; each approach has technological pros and cons as well as organizational considerations.

The current situation in Vermont State government is that the ground was broken several years ago for a decentralized design . mainly by default - because getting all agencies and departments to a centralized architecture at that time was proving too difficult. So, the key question concerns the implications of casting the foundation for a centralized structure instead.

With AHS looking at a significant internal consolidation of five disparate e-mails systems as a precursor to adopting a Microsoft solution, and DPS typically requiring separate communications systems/protocols from the rest of State government because of their special needs, a full exploration and understanding of the technical, operational, and financial impacts must be part of any e-messaging project.

September 27, 2004 State IT Committee Summary

The committee discussed the previous meeting's e-messaging presentation from the Microsoft corporation technical representative. The CIO again emphasized what she envisioned was a narrow slice of an enterprise deployment with regard to centralized e-mail/calendaring, rather than a totally centralized technical architecture for the State. All agreed that a phased-in approach would allow agencies and departments and offices to implement an e-mail architecture best suited to their environment while still participating in the migration to a centralized, MS Exchange/Outlook e-mail/calendaring solution. The specific phases must be planned by the SITCOMM working closely with the State entities.

The nature of a newly constituted IRMAC was further discussed, and the relevant talking points will be finalized in time for the first scheduled meeting of the SITCOMM with other IT staff members to be held the week of October 4th. Final decisions of the group's charter will be made after receiving feedback from the participants. The main points already agreed to by SITCOMM are:

- The IRMAC will become a pool of IT resources
- Each State of Vermont designated IT staff member will be a member of IRMAC
- The SITCOMM will create functional sub-committees consisting of IRMAC members and other program staff as deemed appropriate or necessary
- The subcommittees will be activity or project-defined and will report back to the SITCOMM with their results and recommendations

October 4, 2004 State IT Committee

A large part of the meeting was devoted to the IRMAC redefinition task. A list of operating principles was reviewed and discussed, and this list will be distributed

to current IRMAC members in preparation for an IRMAC meeting to be held Wednesday, October 5. The discussion of the entire list will be the sole topic of the IRMAC meeting. The main principles are:

- The IRMAC will become a pool of IT resources, and will act as a forum and communication channel for the discussion of technical issues
- Each State of Vermont designated IT staff member will be a member of IRMAC, as will other selected, technically-related positions such as web and GIS developers
- The SITCOMM will create functional sub-committees consisting of IRMAC members and other program staff as deemed appropriate or necessary
- The subcommittees will be activity or project-defined and will report back to the SITCOMM with their results and recommendations

Also discussed were the so-called .important first projects.. These include: web content control, web standards, web portal development, e-mail centralization, asset inventory; these are listed in roughly the order they could be practically accomplished. It was agreed that a well-developed, network security policy was needed as a foundation for all these projects.

Specifically, a web content control seminar sponsored by AOT is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, October 5. The vendor product now being tested as a likely state-wide solution is called SurfControl®. Also, an alternative computer asset inventory solution to the use of VISION is being contemplated as necessary because of the special requirements for managing these generally non-depreciable assets, as well as the documented ease-of-use issues with VISION.